

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 045981

15

ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

DODE-00 NSC-05 SS-15 NEA-09 SAB-01 EB-07 COA-01 SAM-01

IO-10 /090 R

66624

DRAFTED BY:EUR/SOV;RMILES/INR/RNA:TMCANDREW

APPROVED BY:EUR/RPM:EJSTREATOR

INR/RES:MGOODMAN

EUR/RPM:DTELLEEN

----- 109893

P R 28224Z FEB 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T STATE 045981

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI NATO, OR, XF, XG, XI

SUBJECT: NATO STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF REOPENING SUEZ
CANAL

REF: (A) USNATO 1039; (B) USNATO 979

1. DEPT REALIZES FAST MOVING CONSIDERATION OF IS DRAFT
MAY MAKE SOME OF FOLLOWING POINTS ON REFTEL B AWKWARD
TO RAISE. NONETHELESS WE HAVE DIFFICULTIES WITH MANY
OF FACTS AND SOME OF CONCLUSIONS IN IS STUDY AND WE LIST
THEM FOR YOUR GUIDANCE. IN GENERAL, WE FEEL REFTEL B
MEANDERS VERY FAR AFIELD FROM WHAT MIGHT BE A TIGHTER
AND MORE USEFUL DOCUMENT NARROWED DOWN TO THE SUBJECT OF
THE TITLE--IMPLICATIONS OF REOPENING THE CANAL. IF

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 045981

NOTHING ELSE, IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO EDIT OUT MOST OF

THE NUMEROUS "RUMORS" AND UNSUBSTANTIATED "REPORTS" WHICH CLUTTER THE DOCUMENT. HERewith OUR SPECIFIC COMMENTS KEYED TO PARAS OF REFTTEL B.

2. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 2. IN LINE 6 CHANGE "SHIPS" TO "CARGOES" AND DROP LAST TWO SENTENCES. DEPT HAS NO INDICATION THAT EGYPTIANS HAVE AGREED, SECRETLY OR OTHERWISE, THAT ISRAELI "SHIPS" WOULD BE ALLOWED TO PASS THROUGH CANAL PRIOR TO CONCLUSION OF OVERALL SETTLEMENT. LAST MONTH SADAT STATED THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH 1888 CONSTANTINOPLE CONVENTION, CANAL WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR

"PASSAGE OF SHIPS OF ALL NATIONS EXCEPT ISRAEL, AS LONG AS A STATE OF WAR EXISTS...".

3. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 8. SOVIETS ARE NO LONGER CARRYING OUT MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS IN STRAITS OF GUBAL. CHANGE "HAVE BEEN CARRYING" TO "CARRIED".

4. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10. A. RED SEA OUTLETS. FIRST SENTENCE DISTORTS SOVIET PRIORITIES. WE BELIEVE SENTENCE WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE IF IT ENDED IN FOLLOWING FASHION: "... BY GAINING ACCESS TO SHORE FACILITIES AND BY PROMOTING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND THE POLICIES OF "PROGRESSIVE IF NOT SOCIALIST REGIMES IN THE AREA."

5. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A. I. SOMALIA. DELETE SECOND AND THIRD SENTENCES IN SECOND PARA BEGINNING "AT BERBERA" AND ENDING "CONTINUOUS PRESENCE THERE". DELETE FIRST SENTENCE IN THIRD PARA BEGINNING "ACCORDING TO CERTAIN UNCONFIRMED REPORTS". CHANGE FOLLOWING SENTENCE TO READ, "SOVIETS HAVE NOT SO FAR ACQUIRED AIR FACILITIES, THOUGH NEW AIRFIELDS, ONE COMPLETED, ONE NEARING COMPLETION, WOULD BE CAPABLE OF HANDLING LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT."

6. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A. I. SOMALIA. IN FIRST SENTENCE OF PARA 7, CHANGE "CANCELLED" TO "REDUCED". IN FOLLOWING SENTENCE, CHANGE "CANCELLATION OF ECONOMIC AID AND MILITARY DEBTS" TO "DEBT REDUCTION".

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 045981

7. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A. II. SOV. AID TO SOMALI ARMED FORCES. IN FIRST FULL SENTENCE OF FIRST PARA CHANGE "10" ILYUSHIN 28S TO "8", DELETE WORDS "AND 14S". FINAL SENTENCE OF FIRST PARA IS ALRIGHT, BUT SAME SOVIET MOTIVATION APPLIES TO ALL SOMALI MILITARY BRANCHES.

8. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A. II. WE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THIS PARA. WE HAVE NOT SEEN ALLEGED REPORT ON

CLAUSE OF SECRET SOVIET-SOMALI MILITARY AGREEMENT.

THIS PARA WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE TO US IF IT WERE REWRITTEN AS FOLLOWS: BEGIN NEW PARA. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT FOR SOME TIME SOVIETS HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN BUILDING AN AIRFIELD NEAR UANLE UEN, 100 KMS NORTHWEST OF MOGADISCIO, THAT IS APPARENTLY DESIGNED

TO BECOME A MAJOR SOMALI MILITARY BASE. THERE IS A REPORT THAT, UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SECRET SOVIET-SOMALI MILITARY AGREEMENT REPORTEDLY SIGNED LAST JULY, THIS NEW AIRFIELD WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO SOVIET AIR FORCE AS A STAGING AREA. END NEW PARA.

9. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A II. IN FOLLOWING PARA, CHANGE PHRASE "SAM 102 AND 103" TO "SAM 2 OR 3".

10. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A II. NAVY. INSERT WORD "MAY" BETWEEN WORDS "UNITE" AND "INCLUDE". WE CANNOT CONFIRM REPORTED DETAILS.

11. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A II. SOVIET EXPERTS. IN FIRST SENTENCE CHANGE "ARMY" TO "ARMED FORCES".

12. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A III. PDRY. SECOND

SENTENCE NEEDS QUALIFICATION. WE SUGGEST FOLLOWING REWRITE, "SHIPS OF SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN SQUADRON NOW MAKE FREQUENT USE OF PORT FACILITIES AT ADEN FOR PROVISIONS, WATER, REST AND RECREATION."

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 045981

13. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A. IV. YAR. WHILE NORTH YEMENIS HAVE REPORTEDLY REQUESTED ARMS OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND QUANTITY TO BE LABELLED "SUBSTANTIVE," WE DO NOT BELIEVE ARMS WHICH SOVIETS HAVE SUPPLIED MERIT USE OF THAT ADJECTIVE.

14. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, A. VI. ETHIOPIA. DROP FINAL SENTENCE. WE HAVE NOT SEEN REPORTS WHICH WOULD INDICATE SOVIETS HAVE INCREASED THEIR BACKING OF ELF THROUGH ARAB COUNTRIES.

15. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10. B. PERSIAN GULF OUTLETS. WE BELIEVE SENTENCE WOULD BE MORE ACCURATE IF IT WERE TONED DOWN AS FOLLOWS: "SOVIET UNION MAY WELL BE TRYING

TO PUT ITSELF IN A POSITION WHERE IT CAN INFLUENCE THE
FLOW OF OIL TO THE WEST."

16. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, B. I. IRAQ. WE ARE NOT
SURE WHAT SENTENCE, "MOSCOW IS BACKING IRAQ'S PERSIAN GULF
POLICY," MEANS. IN ANY CASE, MOSCOW'S INTEREST IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF NORMAL RELATIONS WITH BOTH IRAN AND KUWAIT
PLACES CONSIDERABLE RESTRAINT ON ITS SUPPORT OF IRAQI
FOREIGN POLICY IN THE GULF. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON
"UNCONFIRMED REPORT" THAT SOVIET PILOTS ARE FLYING MIG-23
MISSIONS OVER IRAN AND THE GULF STATES, AND WE FIND IDEA
HIGHLY UNLIKELY.

17. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, B. II. IRAN. WE ARE NOT
SURE OF THE RELEVANCE OF THIS FOOTNOTE, BUT IN ANY
CASE HAVE SOME DIFFICULTIES WITH IT. WE SUGGEST CHANGING
SECOND AND THIRD SENTENCES TO READ AS FOLLOWS, "RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE NOT BEEN GOOD SINCE IRAQI
REVOLUTION OF 1958. RELATIONS TOOK A TURN DOWNWARD IN
1969 WHEN THE SHAH ABROGATED 1936 TREATY ON SHATT AL'
ARAB. UNDER TERMS OF TREATY, FRONTIER RUNS ALONG EASTERN
BANK OF RIVER. IRAN IS SEEKING TO REDEFINE BORDER AS THE
'THALWEG' (DEEPEST BOTTOM LINE OF THE RIVER)." IN NEXT
SENTENCE DELETE CLAUSE "AND IRAQ HAS ALSO BEEN INVOLVED
IN KUWAIT ON SAME ISSUE." FURTHER IN PARA, DELETE
PHRASE "UNOPPOSED" FROM SENTENCE ON IRANIAN OCCUPATION OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 045981

TUMBS ISLANDS (THERE WERE SEVERAL CASUALTIES). DELETE
CLAUSE, "WHERE IT HAS APPARENTLY OBTAINED FACILITIES"
FROM SENTENCE ON UMM QASR. IN FOLLOWING SENTENCE REPLACE
PHRASE "AN EQUAL BALANCE BETWEEN" WITH "GOOD RELATIONS
WITH BOTH". DELETE FINAL SENTENCE, WHICH CARRIES
NUMEROUS IMPLICATIONS SOME OF WHICH WE WOULD NOT AGREE
WITH.

18. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, C. II. TANZANIA. TO MAKE
SECOND SENTENCE MORE CLEAR, INSERT WORD "TANZANIAN" IN
FRONT OF 'AIR FORCE BASE'.

19. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 10, D. II. BANGLADESH. SOVIET
MINESWEEPING AND SALVAGE FORCE LEFT CHITTAGONG IN JUNE,
1974. DELETE FINAL SENTENCE. SOVIETS DO MAKE NAVAL
VISITS TO PORTS IN REGION. REPLACE FIRST SENTENCE IN
SECOND PARA WITH FOLLOWING: "THERE IS A SIZEABLE GROUP
OF SOVIET AIR FORCE ADVISORS IN DACCA".

20. FOOTNOTE (ANNEX) PARA 11. LAST AND LEAST. INDIAN
OCEAN IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE LEAST FISHED BODIES OF WATER

ON EERTH. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MARINE TRANSPORTATION, REPORTS, SUEZ CANAL, MILITARY POLICIES, STUDIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE045981
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EUR/SOV;RMILES/INR/RNA:TMCANDREW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750072-0646
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975021/aaaaaatk.tel
Line Count: 219
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 USNATO 1039, 75 USNATO 979
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <22 SEP 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATO STUDY ON IMPLICATIONS OF REOPENING SUEZ CANAL
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, XF, XG, XI, NATO
To: NATO BRUSSELS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006